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SUGAR BEETS

SUGAR BEET AS A ROTATOR.

The following is from a bulletin recently issued by Mr. R. L. Adams, chief in charge of the sugar factory experiment station at Spreckels, Cal.:

When a farmer smiles a "you-can'tstuff-me" smile when the suggestion is made that he raise sugar beets not only to help out his income but to prolong the life of his farm, one often wonders how this farmer accounts for so many European countries producing their own sugar at a cost greater than to import it. Probably he doesn't try to account for it. But the fact remains that Europe learned long ago that even with her cheapest help she couldn't compete with the peon labor of the tropical countries. Holland owns the Island of Java, but she buys almost no sugar there, notwithstanding that it produces 1,000,000 tons. France gives only the slightest reduction to colonial sugars. But Europe didn't give up making it because she could buy it cheaper. Duty put on imported sugar to protect the home trade-not to insure an income to the few men directly connected with the industry, but because of the great good done to the land-a benefit which covers a long period of time. This means a slight increase in cost to the consumer of the sugar, but lessens his expenditures very materially on other products.

By protecting her sugar industries Europe has given opportunity for the investing of \$500,000,000, an amount which returns to the people \$400,000,000 annually, a sum which would otherwise be paid out to foreign countries. In addition to this \$150,000,000 is derived from the surplus which is exported.

But the principal reason for encouraging the home raising of the sugar beet is as a crop rotator. Used in this way it has reclaimed much worthless land and made good land much more valuable for crop producing purposes. This argument has often been advanced, but most everyone seems to think it untenable. However, in Germany, wheat, barley, rye, potatoes and peas were grown on land just following beets and the yields per acre were increased in the following percentage: Wheat, 24 per cent; barley, 25 per cent; rye, 15 per cent;

potatoes 102 per ct., peas 86 per ct.

The item of potatoes is a very suggestive one and indicates the future possibilities of the Salinas Valley. Land constantly grown to one crop soon deteriorates. If Blanco, Chualar and all sections primarily interested in potato raising would rest their land by a two-years' rotation with the sugar beet the next few crops, after a return to potatoes would be astonishing.

There is nothing supernatural about this. Thorough cultivation of the land affects not only the growing crop but those the following year or two. To grow beets the land is plowed deep and careful, and thorough cultivation is given during the growing season. The plowing is deeper than ordinary by five to ten inches and just so much more land becomes available for future plants, as most crops can derive moisture and nutriment only to the depth of plowing. Repeated plowings to one depth leaves a hard-pan through which it is almost impossible for roots to penetrate. This is broken up by the plowing for the beets.

In the case of the sugar beet numerous small fibrous roots will penetrate many feet down and to the sides, breaking a way through hard, resistant soils.

When the beets are dug these roots are broken off and by rapidly decaying replace humus to the soil, and the humus is the life of the land. In the same way the tops also contribute humus

The holes made by the tiny rootlets are left and the roots of future crops will follow these paths, thus reaching increased stores of available food. So there is nothing miraculous or difficult to understand in regard to the way the beet improves the soil.

One more reason, of a more general nature, showing the value of the sugar beet is in remote sections—particularly arid regions—where long hauls and heavy freight rates prohibit the shipping of low-priced, bulky commodities. Here the bulky beets can be turned into sugar and the \$5 per ton is turned into \$100 and shipped to a market consuming hundreds of thousands of tons of sugar and capable of handling a vast amount more. Verily, the United States can and should be her own Sugar Bowl.

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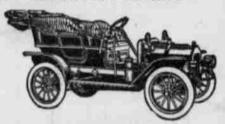
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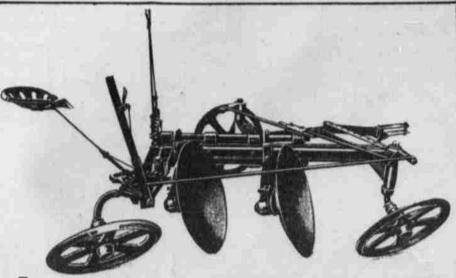
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